

Svíčková na smetaně – Beef Sirloin with Cream Sauce

Czechs love heavy sauces with dumplings. Svíčková na smetaně (sirloin with cream sauce) is the most popular sauce of Czech cuisine. Tender meat with heavy sweet sauce is a challenge to every cook. To exaggerate, most Czech men judge their brides-to-be by their ability to make good sauce. But of course mother always does it the best way. And since the recipes pass from mother to daughter, there are as many different versions of this recipe as there are families. The cream sauce is not always served with beef, but also with pork and rabbit. Svíčková can be also considered as Christmas dish, since in some families it's served on First Christmas Feast (Christmas Day abroad).

Ingredients

- 1kg of beef sirloin
- 150g of bacon (not sliced)
- 150g of parsley
- 150g of celery root
- 300g of carrots
- 300g of onions
- 10 peppercorns
- 5 allspice berries
- 4 bay leaves
- hint of thyme
- 200ml of cream
- 2 spoons of mustard
- 80g of sugar
- lemon
- salt
- oil

- water or broth

Directions

1. Clean the meat and if you want interlard with part of bacon. Salt the meat.
2. Cut the rest of the bacon and with meat stir-fry on oil shortly. Then remove the meat.
3. Dice onion and root vegetable and fry on oil with bacon till it gets tawny.
4. Add peppercorn, allspice and bayleaf. Put sugar and let caramelize.
5. Add mustard and peeled sliced lemon.
6. Pour in water or broth. Put meat in sauce and stew for about 1,5 hour until the meat is tender.
7. Take out the meat from sauce. Remove peppercorns, allspice and bayleaves.
8. Blend vegetable in sauce with mixer and pour cream.
9. Season to taste with salt, sugar or vinegar.
10. Serve with bread dumplings. Garnish with lemon slice, cranberries and whipped cream.

Prague Goulash

Goulash is originally Hungarian recipe, where under this name represents a soup. Czech goulash is more similar to Hungarian pörkelt. Commonly made from beef or pork, but during hunting season venison goulash is also served. You will definitely find it in every Czech restaurant served with dumplings.

Ingredients

- 700g of cubed beef (shin or leg)
- 500g of onion
- lard or oil
- 4 garlic cloves
- 2 spoons of paprika
- teaspoon of cumin/caraway
- salt, pepper
- marjoram

Directions

1. In large pot saute chopped onion in oil until it has golden color.
2. Add paprika and stir quickly otherwise it gets bitter. Add meat and stir-fry for few minutes.
3. Add salt and pepper and put about 200ml of water. Also add cumin, minced garlic and simmer until meat is tender. Stir from time to time and add more water if necessary.
4. Finally add marjoram.
5. If the sauce is too soupy, you can thicken it with a little flour.
6. Best served with bread dumplings, potato pancakes or bread and onion. Tastes best with cold beer.